

Serial No. 10/701,270
67,008-080
Sikorsky Docket No.:S-5643

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the detailed remarks and allowability of claims 18 and 19 which have been rewritten in independent form as claims 23 and 24. Claim 14 has been amended. New claims 25-30 are presented. Accordingly, claims 14-30 are pending.

Claims 14-17, 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baird* (5,519,486). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. *Baird* utilizes a holographic interferometry technique with film and a laser for examining the structural integrity of riveted, bolted or bonded joins in sheet metal or composite structures. *Baird* does not relate *displacing an attachment relative to a seal assembly such that the second skin portion of the skin is movable with the attachment relative to the first portion of the skin* to determine a defect type. Claim 14 is allowable for this reason alone. *Baird* discloses that:

The stressing of the fuselage is then changed (usually, it is pressurised, having been unpressurised previously) and the film or plate is exposed to the laser beam 26 again. *[col. 5, lines 49-51]*

It is not necessary to pressurise the entire aircraft to apply a stress to a region of the fuselage. Stressing or loading of a region of fuselage can be effected by applying two vacuum pads, each with a lever extending away from the fuselage but rigidly attached to the pad, to the fuselage surface near each end of the region being investigated. *To change the load on the region of fuselage, the outer end of each lever is moved towards, or away from, the other lever.* Such a load-applying arrangement is particularly useful when it would be inconvenient to pressurise the entire aircraft. *[col. 9, lines 36-44; emphasis added]*

As recited above, any displacement or stressing disclosed or suggested by *Baird* is caused by external forces, e.g. by pressurizing the fuselage or with levers external to the box 90 – not by the *Baird* device itself. Notably, glass plate 93, although attachable with evacuable feet 88, is not displaceable relative the box 90 once the glass plate 93 is attached to the structure. The claims are properly allowable.

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New claims 25-30 recite further features of the present invention which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references and are thus properly allowable.

Applicant believes that no additional fees are required, however, should additional fees or extensions of time be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, P.C.

Applicant respectfully submits that this case is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a teleconference will facilitate moving this case forward to being issued, Applicant's representative can be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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